



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

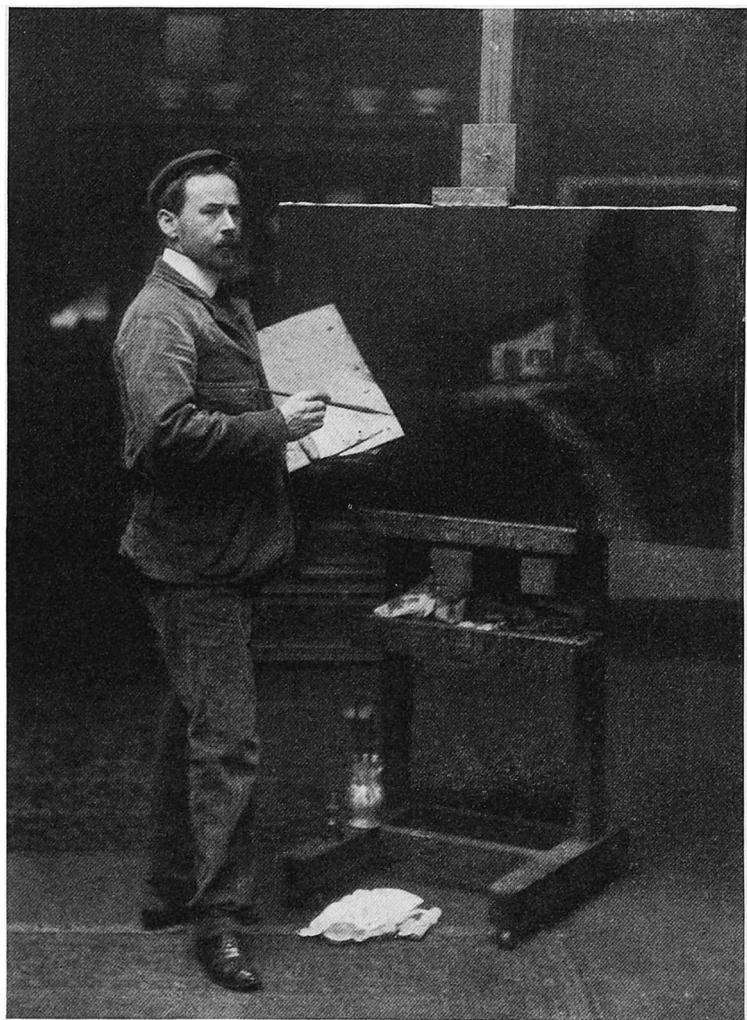
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



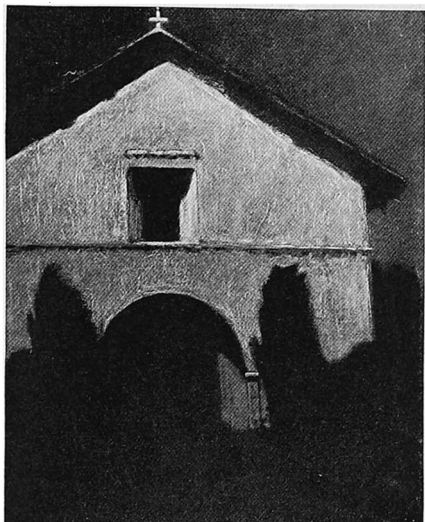
CHARLES ROLLO PETERS

CHARLES ROLLO PETERS

Charles Rollo Peters has brought to Chicago a collection of pictures, shown at O'Brien's galleries, which to both painter and layman is of unusual interest. In the charm of its ensemble and its power of

touching a respondent chord of sympathy and feeling, the exhibition will long rest in the minds of picture lovers as a most important note in the art world.

There will be some who do not care for these moonlights—it is, after all, so much an affair of temperament, but one still finds strong painters who see nothing in Whistler, and eminent composers who are completely at odds with Wagner. I do not think it is overstating the case to say that there is not or cannot be a single work of high artistic merit and strong vital force painted or composed which does not show the influence of these epoch-making masters.

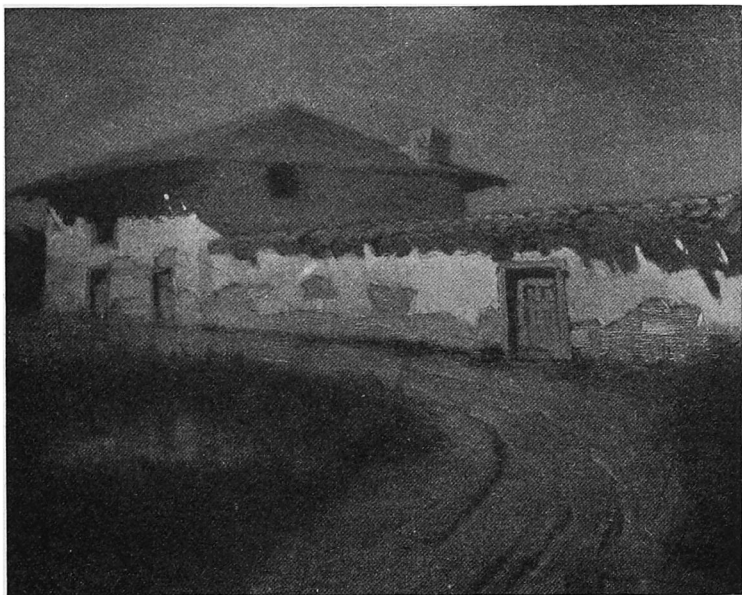


SAN JUAN MISSION

When one is profoundly touched by the sentiment and deeply impressed by the complete intellectual synthesis of an artistic work, clear impartial criticism becomes difficult and analysis embarrassing. So it is with the pictures of Charles Rollo Peters. He has succeeded so well in placing before us a series of results of so high an order, bigness of treatment and scope, and power of individual observation, that one is tempted to swallow them all whole, as it were, and only sing their praise. This is the age of the specialist, and in every branch of work where deep individual research is required it is the specialist who wins. Mr. Peters is distinctly a specialist. He has found for himself a new and strongly personal story to tell, and he tells it with a frankness and directness of interpretation as rare as it is

pleasing and satisfying. In choosing as his theme the particular phase of nature, moonlight, Mr. Peters has at once a subject, although most difficult to handle, from its very character full of romance, mystery, and charm of sentiment unequaled by any other effect.

How many of us have seen most commonplace, everyday, and perhaps ugly motives made gloriously beautiful when enveloped in a mantle of moonlight, which gives to all it covers a richness, poetry,

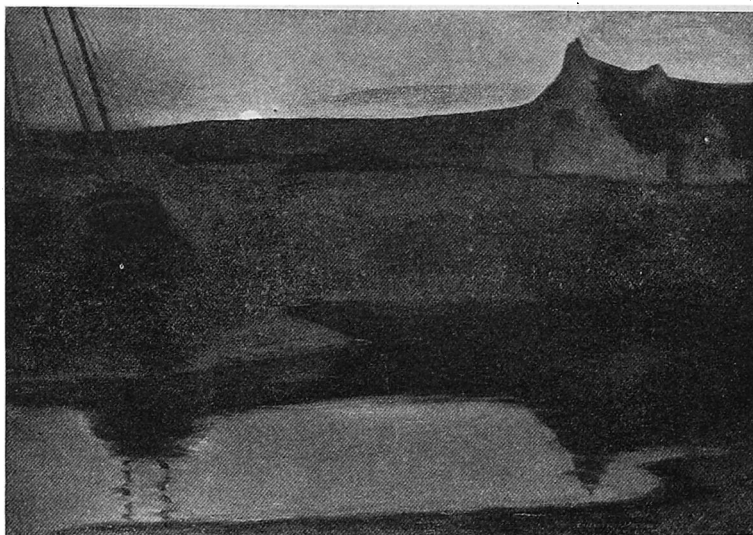


ABANDONADO

and simplicity, and to use an expressive Whistler term, a oneness of ensemble unequaled by the bright light of day.

Mr. Peters is most happy in striking this note, and still happier in having developed it to such a high state of perfection. Moonlight, with all its subtle and varying charms of color, is to the ordinary observer only a scheme of grays, or at the most a bluish green effect, whereas to the trained eye of the painter it is filled with a great variety of tone and diversity of local color. This is one of Mr. Peters's pet theories. He holds that local color is not killed or deadened by moonlight, but only softened and modified, and working on this theory, in painting a given moonlight motive he makes, as an

aid or document, a sketch of the same motive by bright daylight, with all the intensity of the local coloring brought out. He studies much by night, sketching in black and white, and arranging an elaborate scheme of values as a help to memory, and has his mind well trained to grasp and hold many subtle relations of values and tone without which he would lose that stamp of truth one feels so strongly in his work. He is intuitively quick to seize in his subjects the keynote of character or essential quality which goes to make up the true



BRETON MOONRISE

center of interest, and this he holds with a clear head and firm hand while working out his idea.

I first knew "Charley Peters" in the Latin Quarter, Paris, 1886. It was in the days when the old Café des Ecoles and the Hôtel du Senat of the rue de Tournon figured largely in our lives. We knew Peters as one of the more serious students, frank, outspoken and straightforward, but withal a big streak of fun in him, and fond of a joke. He figured as principal or a strong second in many an amusing little episode, and I fancy one would still find floating about the "Quarter" stories of Charley Peters's jokes. To those of us who knew him best he showed in his work even at that early day many of the qualities one now finds in his pictures. As a matter of course at that

time his work was in more or less of an experimental and transition stage, but always with something interesting and personal about it. Although figure pictures were his principal subjects, when he did do landscapes it was with a strong leaning toward twilight and moonlight effects.

Before coming to Paris he had studied at the old San Francisco Art School under Jules Tavernier. In Paris he worked in the Cormon studio, at the Beaux Arts, and at Juliens. Returning to this country in 1889, and after a sojourn here of two years, during which time he married, Mr. Peters went back to Paris for a period of four years' work and study. He established a charming ménage and studio in the rue Boissonnade, and during his stay in Paris his place was the rendezvous par excellence for artistic kindred spirits. He had brought over with him many valuable pieces of Chinese and Japanese furniture and bric-à-brac, and among other things there hung high in the lofty studio two Alaskan walrus-skin canoes, in which he said he was going to take a trip down the Seine; and go he did, with his friend Lockwood, and a fine time they had of it, too.

After this successful stay abroad—successful as far as his artistic development was concerned—Mr. Peters came back to America and has divided the time since his arrival between Monterey and San Francisco. At Monterey he developed what has since become his specialty—moonlight pictures. At the Salon of the Champs Elysées Mr. Peters exhibited annually while abroad. His Salon pictures included figure and landscape subjects, a rather important one being "The Gumps," a group of Dutch women painted at Katwijk, Holland. Another was "On the Beach," a figure picture with fishing boats, also a Dutch subject. His best work of this period was a Salon picture called "Legend of Brittany," inspired by the old Breton tradition that when the moon rises behind the head of the cross it augurs good luck in the fishing. This picture received an honorable mention in the Munich exhibition of 1889, and is now hanging in the Bohemian Club of San Francisco. Already Mr. Peters began showing the direction in which his talent was leaning, for it was about this time that he painted his "Moonlight in Brittany," being the first of the series of this aspect of nature he has since followed so successfully. His interest in and study of twilight and night effects deepened rapidly from this time on, and as a result we have from his brush several canvases, one of the most successful being his picture "Beaux Monde," a night scene in the environs of Paris. This picture now hangs in the Impons gallery at Brussels, and is well spoken of by all who have seen it.

While a successful painter of figures, Mr. Peters has, perhaps wisely, abandoned that branch of painting for pure landscape, although he occasionally seems to feel *Il mare mi chiama*, and paints the sea and its shipping under many and various effects. Mr. Peters



AFTER THE GRINGO CAME

was always a lover of boats, and the best picture from many points of view he has recently painted, and one which we greatly miss in his Chicago exhibition, is his picture of our great battleship, the Oregon. The San Francisco *Wave* says of this work: "Charles Rollo Peters's picture of the Oregon, purchased by the Bohemian Club of this city by popular subscription, and given to the U. S. S. Oregon, was painted to commemorate the battleship's famous run around the Horn. It is full of mystery and meaning, that once seen can never be forgotten. It is a moonlight, of course—probably the best moonlight Peters has ever done. From the blackness of night into a ray of brilliant moonlight looms the bow of the warship. The lights are well managed, and the whole picture is full of the suggestion of war's grim realities. Wood from the famous old Hartford has been obtained from Admiral Kirkland, to be used for the frame. The legend on the canvas, taken from John James Meehan, runs:

"When your boys shall ask
What the guns were for,
Then tell them the tale
Of the Spanish war,
And the countless millions
That looked upon
The matchless race
Of the Oregon."

It is, perhaps, needless to add that this picture, of the highest order of artistic merit, aroused the utmost enthusiasm among painters, public, and officers of the navy, and is now hanging in its final resting-place on board the good ship Oregon.

Charles Rollo Peters is a serious, hard-working student, as the results fully prove. In his exhibition at O'Brien's every canvas is worthy of especial study and mention, and it is to be regretted that the BRUSH AND PENCIL cannot give space for the reproduction of them all. In one-man exhibitions, generally, we find a few important pictures, the *clous* as it were of the exhibit, and the rest are minor things—good, perhaps, but not up to the standard of the others. In Mr. Peters's collection, on the contrary, each and every canvas is so full of beauty, strength, and interest, each a conscientious effort to render and interpret the artist's impression as it is and for what it is, that to discriminate and select a few to represent the whole is nearly impossible. Perhaps one of the truest and strongest in treatment, and one which impresses us deeply with its power, is the canvas called "San Juan Mission." This picture, with its original placing on the canvas, its masterly handling in its composition of light and shade, is filled with vibration and intensity as well as quiet, dignified simplicity, and is one of the painter's best results. The artist shows here his power of getting atmosphere in the deepest shadows, and has fully suggested the local coloring in the lights as well.

It is a faithful, personal interpretation of the artist's impression of

moonlight on the walls of the old San Juan Mission, and resembles in no sense the usual conventional scenic moonlight done after a receipt.

The canvases "Abandonado" and "After the Gringo Came," tell to perfection the story of another and once prosperous race overrun, dispersed, and melted away by the giant westward strides of our young, fresh, and all-powerful civilization. Both of these pictures are remarkable in their light-giving quality, though so low in tone and quiet. In the "Abandonado," the painter is particularly good in his handling of textures, the different materials in the old house and garden wall being cleverly managed, still having these contrasts blending successfully together in one harmonious whole.

In the picture of the house on the hill, Mr. Peters's own home at Monterey, he has solved a hard problem in his treatment of values, making the artificial light in the window of the house take its place perfectly with regard to the moonlight, a feat not often so well accomplished.

"The Breton Moonlight," although perhaps a trifle more conventional than some of the others, is nevertheless a true Peters in its showing of original, individual observation and strong handling. In impressive dignity, extreme simplicity, and beauty of line and arrangement of names in the composition "The River" is Mr. Peters' best example. No one can fail to be deeply impressed by the quietness of the placid winding river, the dignity of the man of trees, and the completely satisfying rendering of the subtle never-ending mystery of night. The other pictures of this exhibition are equally worthy of note, and there are several charming smaller canvases which as clearly show the aim and direction of the artist as his larger works.

Charles Rollo Peters has come into the ranks of America's best painters as a new light of strong personality. We welcome with joy this original note, and will follow with intense interest its future development. In the words of his own picturesque West, he has "struck his gait," and it promises to be as steady, sure, and far reaching as it has been rapid.

F. W. RAMSDELL.



From original Painting by E. A. Burlank — Copyrighted, Brush & Pencil, Chicago, 1899

CHICAGO COLOR TYPE CO.

ZY-YOU-WAH—MOQUI PAPOOSE

In ceremony costume. The markings on head-dress represent rainbow and rain clouds, also various flowers that grow in the Moqui country.